



Goldwyn School

Attendance and Absence Policy (Students)

Review Body:	Kerry Greene/Learning & Inclusion
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Mission Statement

Our School Community Vision is 'Aspire, Empower, Achieve'

We **ASPIRE** for our students to be the best they can be by providing a 'whole child education' where their talents are nurtured and they are provided with opportunities to flourish. We aspire for them when they see barriers and cannot aspire for themselves. We aspire for our staff to be the best they can be, investing in their well-being, professional development and access to external networks.

We **EMPOWER** each other as a community, recognising and praising excellence and progress in each other. We empower each other to build resilience and overcome barriers. By taking a 'Growth Mindset approach' we empower ourselves in a continuous journey of learning.

We **ACHIEVE** self-development, qualifications and instilling self-confidence to achieve our ambitions, for students moving onto higher education or their chosen career path

We endeavour to create a challenging & inspiring learning environment, where staff work together to encourage all students to reach their full potential.

We celebrate the success of our students and encourage their individual talents and skills. We aim to maximise their access to and engagement with social and educational settings.

Goldwyn School works towards providing learning opportunities where students experience:

- A sense of personal security
- Enjoyment of learning
- Respect and being valued
- Supportive relationships
- Sharing their lives with positive adult role models
- Clear, meaningful and flexible boundary setting
- Successful achievement boosting their self-esteem
- Opportunities to obtain academic and/or vocational qualifications
- Chance to flourish and exercise personal responsibility

Through developing personal resilience and providing students with the motivation to succeed Goldwyn School encourages students to be the best that they can be!

Our core school community values are:

We promote a school community where all members demonstrate:

Resilience - Resilience to barriers faced in creating independent, innovative and creative minds

Empathy - Caring for ourselves, for each other, showing respect to each other and building a sense of belonging

Aiming – Aiming to achieve our potential

Commitment – Commitment to success, personal development and opportunity

Heart - Passionate for the difference we make

We work to reverse patterns of failure and ultimately encourage students to be the best that they can be!

Goldwyn School is committed to the continuous raising of achievement of all our students. Regular attendance is critical if our students are to be successful and benefit from the opportunities presented to them.

One of our basic principles is to celebrate success. Good attendance is fundamental to a successful and fulfilling school experience. We actively promote 100% attendance for all our students and we use a variety of weekly, termly and annual awards to promote good attendance and punctuality.

The Governors, Principal and Staff in partnership with parents have a duty to promote full attendance at Goldwyn School. The Principal and Senior Leadership Team of Goldwyn, are responsible for the strategic approach to school attendance.

Goldwyn School's Leadership will apply the school's policy fairly and consistently. The individual needs of pupils and their families who have specific barriers to attendance should be considered, along with the schools' obligations under the:

- **Equality Act (2010) Guidance:** <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/equality-act-2010-guidance>
- **UN Convention on the Rights of the Child:** <https://www.unicef.org.uk/what-we-do/un-convention-child-rights/>

Whole School Policy for School Attendance - Aims

1. For all students to make significant and sustained improvements from their starting points
2. To make attendance and punctuality a priority for all those associated with the school including students, parents/carers, teachers and governors.
3. To develop a framework which defines agreed roles and responsibilities and promotes consistency in carrying out designated tasks.
4. To provide support, advice and guidance to parents/carers and students.
5. To maintain a systematic approach to gathering and analysing attendance data.
6. To further develop positive and consistent communication between home and school.
7. To implement a system of rewards and sanctions.
8. To promote effective partnerships with other services and agencies.
9. To recognise the needs of the individual student when planning reintegration following significant periods of absence.

1. To Improve the Overall Percentage Attendance of Students at School

- Apply Whole School Attendance Policy consistently. (see Penalty Notices no.6)
- Establish and maintain a high profile for attendance and punctuality.
- Relate attendance issues directly to the school's values, ethos and curriculum.
- Monitor progress in attendance measurable outcomes.
- To liaise closely with Kent PRU and Attendance Service (KPAS) following absences
- To consider the use of Kent Local Education Authority Penalty notices in cases of 10 sessions of absence in a current term (10 weeks). Penalty Notices may be considered appropriate in the following circumstances:
 - Truancy including truancy sweeps
 - Parentally condoned absences
 - Excessive holidays in term times
 - Excessive delayed return from extended holidays
- To liaise with KPAS and Attendance Enforcement Team re issuing of Penalty notices, issuing formal warnings as appropriate under LA guidelines

2. To Make Attendance and Punctuality a Priority for All Those Associated with the School Including Students, Parents/Carers, Teachers and Governors

- Use staff handbook, prospectus and DfE literature.
- Produce termly/annual reports to parents/carers/governors.
- Raise the importance of good attendance at induction meetings for all new parents/carers/students.
- Promote good attendance through school newsletters and individual communications.
- Provide INSET training for appointed/promoted staff.
- Display materials at focal points on all sites.
- Discuss attendance issues in staff meetings and student reviews, etc.
- Introduce award systems, such as certificates, raffle tickets, badges, trophies, end of year prizes, etc.
- Inform parents via letter of the LA's Penalty Notice procedure
- Inform parents via letter when attendance is becoming a concern.
- Inform parents of the need to supply a letter informing the school of reason for absence.
- Discussions regarding attendance at Parent and Teacher Consultations

3. To Develop a Framework Which Defines Agreed Roles and Responsibilities and Promotes Consistency in Carrying Out Designated Tasks

- Maintain unambiguous procedures for statutory registration.
- Use of pastoral staff who have appropriate time set aside to follow up attendance concerns with phone calls, emails and texts to parents
- Liaison between the AP - Wellbeing, Behaviour and Attendance, Heads of School, Pastoral Leads and centre admin support to follow up attendance letters to parents / carers.
- Use of Arbor to monitor attendance daily including follow up.
- Pastoral Lead, Hub / Group leads make phone contact, on first day of absence.
- Pastoral leads and staff team who will follow up absences and undertake home visits.
- Ensure clearly defined late registration procedures.
- Respond swiftly to lateness (in respect of taxis, students and parents).
- Define clearly the roles and responsibilities within the school staffing structure.
- Timetable staff to meet with KPAS, making best use of Attendance and Behaviour Officers' time (advertise the times to parents).
- Have clear procedures prior to referral to KPAS
- Review attendance regularly and regularly liaise with Heads of School and centre pastoral staff.
- Be familiar with KPAS referral and recording system

4. To Provide Support, Advice and Guidance to Parents and Students

Highlight attendance in:

- PHSE
- Assemblies
- Staff available to talk to students
- School counsellor
- 'Mentors' system
- Making use of available resources
- Public support offered by school.
- Set aside time for parents to speak to staff.
- Seek improved communication with parents e.g. when parents ring in.
- Provide accurate and up-to-date contact information for parents.
- Involve parents from earliest stage.
- Keep parents informed of attendance processes and updates through Newsletters, Prospectus, etc-

- Provide all students with 'passes' for authorised absence (e.g. Work Experience, Interviews, Holiday, etc.).

5. To maintain a systematic approach to gathering and analysing attendance data.

Standardise recording of:

- authorised/unauthorised absence
- educational activity presence
- Be consistent in the collection and provision of information.

Decide what information is provided for:

- governors
- pastoral staff
- other school staff
- parents
- students (individual or groups)
- KPAS Through pathway 3 sickness returns and in liaison with the schools Inclusion and Attendance advisors at a Targeted Support Meeting
- Identify developing patterns of irregular attendance and lateness.

6. To Further Develop Positive and Consistent Communication between Home and School

- Initiate first day absence contact.
- Make full use of computer generated letters.
- Promote expectation of absence letters/phone calls from parents.
- Explore the wide range of opportunities for parental partnerships (see Aim 2).
- Provide information in a user-friendly way.
- Ensure home visits from the Specialist Engagement Officers.
- Encourage all parents into school.
- To inform parents of the intention to issue Penalty Notices in cases deemed appropriate.

7. To Implement a System of Rewards and Sanctions

- Identify finance for a system of rewards.
- Actively promote attendance and associated reward and effective sanctions.
- Ensure fair and consistent implementation.
- Involve students in system evaluation.
- Take action which accords with objectives agreed between school and others, eg. KPAS, parent, Behaviour Support Service.

8. To promote effective partnerships with other services and agencies.

- Designated key staff for liaison with KPAS, Early Help and other agencies.
- Give priority to timetabled meetings with KPAS.
- Carry out initial enquiries/intervention prior to referral.
- Gather and record relevant information to assist KPAS.
- Hold termly attendance reviews with key school staff and invite KPAS when appropriate.
- Arrange multi-agency liaison meetings as appropriate.
- Establish and maintain list of named contacts within the local community e.g. community police contact officer.
- Encourage active involvement of other services and agencies in the life of the school.
- Develop understanding of agency constraints and operating environments.

9. To Recognise the Needs of the Individual Student When Planning Reintegration Following Significant Periods of Absence

- Be sensitive to the individual needs and circumstances of returning students.
- Involve/inform all staff in/of reintegration process.

- Provide opportunities for counselling and feedback.
- Consider peer support and mentoring.
- Involve parents as far as possible.
- Agree timescale for review of reintegration plan.
- Include KPAS, parents and student in reintegration plan.

Roles and Responsibilities

Local Authority (Kent County Council) Responsibility

To: All pupils

- Have a strategic approach to improving attendance for the whole area and make it a key focus of all frontline council services.
- Have a School Attendance Support Team (KPAS) that works with all schools in their area to remove area-wide barriers to attendance.
- Provide each school with a named point of contact in the School Attendance Support Team who can support with queries and advice.
- Offer opportunities for all schools in the area to share effective practice.

Where Pupils at risk of becoming persistently absent (10% + sessions missed)

- Hold a termly conversation with every school to identify, discuss and signpost or provide access to services for pupils who are persistently or severely absent or at risk of becoming so.
- Where there are out of school barriers, provide each identified pupil and their family with access to services they need in the first instance.
- If the issue persists, facilitate a voluntary early help assessment where appropriate. Take an active part in the multi-agency effort with the school and other partners. Provide the lead practitioner where all partners agree that a local authority service is best placed to lead.
- Where the lead practitioner is outside of the local authority, continue to work with the school and partners.

Severely absent pupils (50% + sessions missed)

- Continued support as for persistently absent pupils and:
- All services should make this group the top priority for support. This may include a whole family plan, consideration for an education, health and care plan, or alternative form of educational provision.
- Be especially conscious of any potential safeguarding issues, ensuring joint working between the school, children's social care services and other statutory safeguarding partners. Where appropriate, this could include conducting a full children's social care assessment and building attendance into children in need and child protection plans.

Support for cohorts of pupils with lower attendance than their peers and demographic groups

- Track local attendance data to prioritise support and unblock area wide attendance barriers where they impact numerous schools.
- Support for pupils with medical conditions or SEND with poor attendance.
- Work closely with relevant services and partners, for example special educational needs, educational psychologists, and mental health services, to ensure joined up support for families.
- Ensure suitable education, such as alternative provision, is arranged for children of compulsory school age who because of health reasons would not otherwise receive a suitable education.

• Support for pupils with a social worker (VSK - Virtual School Kent)

- Regularly monitor the attendance of children with a social worker in their area.
- Put in place personal education plans for looked-after children.

- Secure regular attendance of looked-after children as their corporate parent and provide advice and guidance about the importance of attendance to those services supporting pupils previously looked after.

Parental Responsibility

Parents/Carers have a legal duty to ensure that their children attend school regularly, are ready for their home to school transport and arrive on time. Regular attendance is essential to the all-round development of the Child and they should be allowed to take full advantage of educational opportunities available to them in order to make good progress in their learning. Poor attendance undermines their educational attainment and progress and, sometimes, puts students at risk by encouraging anti-social behaviour.

It is the parents'/carers' responsibility to contact the school on the first day their child is absent. This is a safeguarding requirement so that all parties know that your child is safe and their whereabouts is known. Parents should regularly update the school and inform the school when their child is returning.

The Role of the School Staff-

At Goldwyn School there is a whole-school responsibility and approach for improving school attendance, with specific staff taking individual responsibility.

Each Head of School has overall responsibility for monitoring attendance issues of the students at their site.

The Principal/ Assistant Principal – Wellbeing, Behaviour and Attendance has overall responsibility for monitoring attendance issues.

Students are expected to arrive at school 8:40am – 8:50am. They will then move to their LCUs (Learning Community Units) where they will be registered by the Pastoral Manager. Any students that arrive after that time will be met by the Transport Manager who will inform the pastoral manager who will inform the LCU and register them.

Drivers will inform Pastoral Manager/ Head of School if a student is absent. The pastoral manager will contact home to enquire reason for absence and record on contact log on Goldwyn Information Management system (Arbor).

Marking the attendance registers twice daily is a legal requirement. (The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006). Attendance is recorded both electronically, on Arbor – the school's Management Information System, and manually. In addition, Teachers complete a class register during every lesson (using Arbor). The class teacher and Hub Leads will notify Head of School and Centre Leadership Teams of any students whose attendance is causing concern.

It is the responsibility of the Head of School, and Centre Leadership Teams, to ensure:

- Attendance records are up to date.
- If no reason for absence has been provided, parents are contacted on the first day of absence by phone call.
- Where there has been no communication, follow-up action is taken, either by phone, email or by letters to parents, requesting reasons for absence.
- The appropriate attendance code is entered into the register (see National Attendance Codes).
- Parents are informed termly of the child's attendance figure

Timeline of the Staged Approach for Managing Poor Attendance

- 90-100% attendance – the Hub Lead to investigate and notify Pastoral Manager of concerns. Unit Leaders to contact parent if appropriate.
- 80-90% attendance - school intervention letters/meeting with parents
- Where the level of absence has not improved and there are unauthorised absences, the school will make a referral to the KPAS using the Digital Front Door. If it is not clear a referral to the Service is appropriate, the school will consult with the Local Authority attendance service (KPAS) for advice.
- For the cases that require intensive family support, the school may make an Early Help Notification. This may lead to an assessment of the child's and family's needs, or signposting to other additional support, where appropriate.

Children Missing Education

No student should be removed from the school roll without instruction from SEN.

Please see the circumstances below:

Where a child is missing from education, Local Authority guidance will be followed, by completing a Child Missing Education referral for the following circumstances:-

- If the whereabouts of the child is unknown and the school has failed to locate him/her.
- The family has notified the school that they are leaving the area but no Common Transfer Form (pupil file) has been requested by another school.

Lateness

At Goldwyn School attendance records are kept both manually and electronically. The Head of School are responsible for attendance issues at their sites, and they will collate-and analyses data regarding attendance and check-progress against measurable outcomes, and in accordance with the DfE requirements submit-details of the level of absence within the school annually. At morning 'Check' the Pastoral Development Leaders report the status of the unit regarding which students may be late because of transport difficulties, and those for whom absence is authorised and unauthorised.

If a student is absent without explanation when the register is called, Key Workers will contact parents/carers as soon as possible, (and before 10.30am) and report their findings to the Senior Management Team. In the case of post registration truancy, parents/carers will be informed by SMT or Key Worker. (see Absconding in the Social Emotional Behaviour Support Policy)

Registers are taken prior to the afternoon sessions taking place. Students are then registered on the 'Arbor' system. This generates subject registers for teachers to fill in every lesson. Details from the school attendance register are entered onto Arbor daily. Keyworkers (Hub Leads, Pastoral and Inclusion Leads) will alert SMT to 3 consecutive days of absence (without parental contact) resulting in a letter to parents/ carers. Home visits by the SEO will also be actioned.

Students are expected to arrive promptly for their lessons. An attendance register is kept by each subject teacher. Should a student be absent from a lesson without permission, or leave the classroom without prior arrangement or permission, he/she will be expected to make up time with that member of staff, during break or after school. The teacher will complete a notification through the school behaviour monitoring system. If a student fails to attend a lesson he they will receive no points for that period of time.

'Flexi-schooling'

Goldwyn school has links with colleges, and other registered and regulated educational providers, to promote a flexible approach to meeting individual educational needs and some students are educated elsewhere whilst remaining on the school roll. This approach is termed as 'Flexi-schooling', and is instituted as a supportive mechanism with the full knowledge, and agreement, of parents and carers.

Flexi-schooling is legal in the UK but it isn't an automatic right, unlike full-time home education. It is entirely at the discretion of the school's Principal, who is required to give permission before it can go ahead. Statutory Guidance: Elective home education: [Elective home education: departmental guidance for local authorities \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://www.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/671442/elective-home-education-departmental-guidance-for-local-authorities.pdf)

Any student with flexi-schooling agreement must have a Personalised Learning Plan (PLP) that is written by the centre staff and reviewed regularly with parents.

Penalty Notice Proceedings for Poor Attendance or Lateness

Key Stage 3, Key Stage 4 and some Key Stage 5 students are transported to their individual sites by Goldwyn School transport. This ensures children arrive on time and safely to school.

At Key Stage 5 and occasionally for some YR11 students (with appropriate risk assessment in place) public transport is used. For these students the following guidance may be used.

Penalty Notices are issued in accordance with Kent County Council's Education Penalty Notices Code of Conduct revised August 2024, when the national threshold has been met:

When a school becomes aware that the national threshold has been met, they must consider whether a penalty notice can and should be issued or not. The national threshold has been met when a pupil has been recorded as absent for 10 sessions (usually equivalent to 5 school days) within 10 school weeks, with one of, or a combination of the following codes:

- *Code G (the pupil is absent without leave for the purpose of a holiday or unauthorised leave of absence.*
- *Code O (none of the other rows of Table 3 in regulation 10(3) of the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024 applies), and*
- *Code U (the pupil attended after the taking of the register ended but before the end of the session, where no other code applies)*

Key considerations prior to the issue of a Penalty Notice for school absence

The following considerations will be made before issuing (or requesting that another authorised officer issues) a penalty notice to ensure consistency of approach:

- *Is a penalty notice the best available tool to improve attendance and change parental behaviour for this particular family or would one of the other legal interventions be more appropriate?*
- *Is issuing a penalty notice in this case appropriate after considering any obligations under the Equality Act 2010?*
- *Is it in the public interest to issue a penalty notice in this case given Kent County Council would be accepting responsibility for any resulting prosecution for the original offence in cases of non-payment?*
- *In cases where support is appropriate, consider on a case-by-case basis: Has sufficient support already been provided? Sufficient support will usually include: Correspondence and telephone calls with parents, inviting parents to a meeting to discuss attendance and supportive intervention to improve attendance? .This may include support from KCC services, health services, and partners in the voluntary and community sectors (VCS) If the answer to the above questions is 'yes', then a penalty notice (or a notice to improve in cases where support is appropriate) will usually be issued. In cases where support is not appropriate (for example, for holidays in term time), consider on a case by case basis.*

Notice to improve

A notice to improve is a final opportunity for a parent to engage in support and improve attendance before a penalty notice is issued. If the national threshold has been met and support is appropriate but offers of support have not been engaged with by the parent or have not worked, a notice to improve should usually be sent to give parents a final chance to engage in support.

Kent schools will issue a notice to improve for parentally-condoned absence and unauthorised absence. It will not be necessary to issue a notice to improve for term time holidays or leave of absence.

The Notice to Improve must include:

- *Details of the pupil's attendance record and details of the offences (a copy of the registration certificate should be included).*
- *The date range in which 10 or more unauthorised absences occurred.*
- *The benefits of regular attendance and parents' duty under section 7 of the Education Act 1996. • Details of the support provided so far.*
- *Opportunities for further support and the option to access previously provided support that was not engaged with.*
- *A clear warning that a penalty notice may be issued or prosecution considered if attendance improvement is not secured within the improvement period.*
- *A clear timeframe for the 20 school day improvement period detailing to and from dates.*
- *Details of what sufficient improvement within that timeframe will look like.*

At the end of an unsatisfactory monitoring period, schools may request a penalty notice to be issued if this is considered this is the best course of action to improve attendance. The referral should include evidence of support offered by the school prior to issuing the notice to improve. The notice to improve must comply with Department for Education requirements.

Where Penalty Notices are imposed, the regulations state that the penalty will be charged at £80 if paid within 21 days, rising to £160 if paid between days 22 and 28. Where it is deemed appropriate to issue a second penalty notice to the same parent for the same pupil within 3 years of the first offence, the second notice is charged at a flat rate of £160 and is payable within 28 days. There is no reduced sum available in this instance. Penalty Notices are issued to each parent of each child. Failure to pay the penalty in full by the end of the 28 day period will result in prosecution by the Local Authority.

Persistent unauthorised absence (10% or more of the school year) may result in an AS1 statutory referral to the Local Authority attendance service (KPAS) for consideration of prosecution. The school will follow procedures prior to referral and parents will be notified in writing.

When a referral is made, the child's Registration Certificate, copies of all letters sent to parents and minutes of any meetings **need to** be attached to the completed AS1 referral form with any other relevant information.

Local Authority Action may include:

- Formal Attendance Meeting
- Home visits
- School Attendance Orders
- Liaison with other agencies
- Fast Track to Prosecution

Authorising Absence

Only the Principal and Head of School can authorise absence using a consistent approach. The Principal and Head of School are not obliged to accept a parent's explanation. A letter or telephone message from a parent does not in itself authorise an absence. If absences are not authorised, parents will be notified.

If no explanation is received, absences will not be authorised.

Absence (for example leave for holidays) during term time can only be approved in "exceptional circumstances". The following reasons are examples of absence that will not be authorised:

- Persistent nonspecific illness e.g. poorly/unwell
- Absence of siblings if one child is ill
- Oversleeping
- Inadequate clothing/uniform
- Confusion over school dates
- Medical/dental appointments of more than half a day without very good reasons
- Child's/family birthday
- Shopping trip
- Family Holidays (with some rare exceptions)

Any examples provided are illustrative rather than exhaustive. It is acceptable to take a pupil's previous record of attendance into account when the school is making decisions. The fundamental principles for defining 'exceptional' are rare, significant, unavoidable and short. And by 'unavoidable' it implies that an event could not reasonably be scheduled at another time. It is important to note that Principal or Heads of School agree the absence of a child in exceptional circumstances and this discretion can be used also to determine the length of the authorised absence.

Section 444 of the Education Act 1996 says that parents are **guilty** of an offence of failing to secure regular attendance at school unless they can prove that the child was absent:

- with leave (the school has given permission)
- due to sickness or any unavoidable cause (the sickness or unavoidable cause must relate to the child, not the parent)
- religious observance
- failure by the Local Authority to provide transport

In law, these are the only acceptable reasons for a child being absent from school.

The Principal or Head of School may authorise absence in "exceptional circumstances" but this must be requested in advance and agreement to each request is at the discretion of the Principal, acting on behalf of the Governing Body (Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006). Each case will be judged on its merits and the Principal's decision is final. Once the decision not to authorise leave is taken, it cannot be authorised retrospectively.

If the absence is not authorised and the holiday is taken anyway, the case may be referred to the KPAS who may issue a Penalty Notice to each parent for each child taken out of school.

Failure to pay the penalty in full by the end of the 28 day period will result in prosecution by the Local Authority.

Appendix 1 - Absent – Authorised or Unauthorised.

For each student the attendance register is marked either:

Present – an oblique stroke records presence, with a stroke in the reverse direction for the afternoon session / \

or

Engaged in an approved educational activity away from school site. The following activities show when the approved educational activity category can be used:

- Field trips and educational visits, in this country and overseas;
- Participation in or attendance at approved sporting activities;
- Interviews with prospective employers or for a place at a further or higher education establishment (Year 11 only)
- Link courses, whereby students attend an FE college for part of the time;
- Franchised students receiving part of their tuition off-site at another location while remaining under overall supervision of the home school (i.e. a flexible arrangement short of formal dual registration). This can include special tuition for dyslexic children and sick children being taught at home but remaining on roll.

Absent: Authorised or Unauthorised. Authorised absence is recorded as O with a supplementary code inside to record the reason. Unauthorised absence is recorded O with no additional code inside. If a student is absent the register must show whether or not the absence was authorised or unauthorised.

Authorised absence is absence with permission from the Principal, Head of School or authorised representative of the school. Parents/carers may not authorise absence, only the school can do this. The following table shows types of absence that the school may treat as authorised:

Illness, medical and Dental appointments	• Missing registration for a medical or dental appointment is authorised absence. Students should be encouraged to make appointments out of school hours. Sight of an appointment card is advisable if a student is an irregular attender. • If a student is present for registration but has a medical appointment later, or returns home because of illness, no absence need be recorded for that session. • Goldwyn School keeps a record of students leaving or returning to site in case of an emergency. • If the authenticity is illness but is in doubt, schools and School Attendance Officers can consult the School Health Service, or the student's GP. • A student receiving medical treatment on site should be marked 'present'
Days of religious observance	• Absence to take part in any day set aside exclusively for religious observance by the religious body to which the parents belong, including religious festivals. • Parents should be encouraged to give advanced notice.
Interviews with prospective employers, or for a place at another school (including entrance examinations)	• Goldwyn staff will normally ask for advance notice and proof of the appointment, e.g. a letter of invitation. • If the interview takes place during Year 11 and the school is satisfied it is linked to future education or employment prospects, absence can be recorded as 'approved educational activity'.
Study Leave	• Study leave should be used sparingly and only for Year 11 students during mock and public examinations. • Study leave should not normally exceed 15 school days during Year 11.

	• If possible the period of study leave should be less than the examination period. Regard should also be paid to the individual student's ability to manage study leave and benefit from it. • Unsupervised study leave is not an 'approved educational activity' –it is authorised absence.
Dual Registration involving Student Referral Units or Special Schools	• The law allows for dual registration of students at both a special school and another local school. This helps, for example, to ease a phased return to mainstream education. • Where a student is dually registered at institution X and Y, institution X marks the student authorised absent, while they are attending institution Y and vice-versa. Both institutions share responsibility for the child. • Failure to attend either institution at the proper time without good reason is unauthorised attendance.
Family holidays during term time.	• Parents should not normally take students on holidays in term time. • Goldwyn School will not authorise time taken off during term time for holidays. • If a school does not agree absence and the student goes on holiday, absence is unauthorised. • Schools may delete from roll a pupil who fails to return within 10 school days of the agreed return date unless there is a good reason for the continued absence, such as illness.
Exclusion	• A student excluded for a fixed period remains on roll and the absence should be treated as authorised as it results from a decision taken by the school. Similarly, the absence of a permanently excluded student is treated as authorised while any review or appeal is in progress. • If a permanent exclusion is confirmed, the student's name should be removed from the school roll on the day either: after the appeal committee's confirmation of permanent exclusion; or on expiry of the time allowed for appeals to be made; or, if before that, the student takes up a place elsewhere. Meanwhile absence should be recorded as authorised. • Teachers are responsible for setting work for an excluded student who remains on the school roll.
Gypsy, Roma and Traveller child when the family is travelling	• A number of different groups are covered by the generic term Traveller – Roma, English and Welsh Gypsies, Irish and Scottish Travellers, Showmen (fairground people) and Circus people, Bargees (occupational boat dwellers) and New Travellers. • To help ensure continuity of learning for Traveller children, dual registration is allowed. This means that a school cannot remove a Traveller child from the school roll while they are travelling. • While the Traveller is away, the base school holds the place open and records absence as authorised. • Distance learning packs for Traveller children are not an alternative to attendance at school.
Family bereavement/s, or child caring for a sick or disabled family member (young carers)	• Goldwyn School will respond sensitively to requests to attend funerals or associated events and have discretion to authorise such absences. • Similarly, the school may authorise limited duration absence for young carers until other arrangements can be made
Special occasions	• Goldwyn School will consider each request individually. Only exceptional occasions warrant leave of absence. For example, attending the wedding of a family member would be acceptable, but a day's absence for a birthday or a shopping trip in school hours would not.

	Schools should consider: the nature of the event; its frequency (is it one-off, or likely to become a regular occurrence?); whether the parent gave advance notice; the student's overall attendance pattern.
Public performance/s	- The Local Authority must licence a student to take part in a public performance. - Agreed participation should be treated as authorised absence.
Birth of a child	- Support should be directed to keeping the student in school wherever possible, and to her return to full-time education as soon as possible after the birth. - A student who becomes pregnant should be allowed no more than 18 weeks' authorised absence to cover the time immediately before and after the birth of the child. After that time, any absence should be treated as unauthorised.
Lateness	- Goldwyn School will actively discourage late arrival and be alert to patterns of late arrival which could provide grounds for prosecution. - Goldwyn School will have a policy on how long registers should be kept open. Thirty minutes from the beginning of registration would be reasonable, but schools can set shorter periods. - In circumstances such as bad weather or public transport difficulties, schools may keep the register open for a longer period.

Appendix 2 - Attendance Codes 2024

Present Codes	
/ \	present during registration
B	educated off site and for taster days and do not fit K, V, P or W codes
K	attending provision arranged by the local authority under Section 19 of the EA 1996
L	arrived after the register has started but before it has closed
P	participation in a sporting activity with prior agreement from school
V	educational visit or trip supervised by a member of the school staff
W	attending work experience under arrangements by the school or local authority
Absent Codes	
Authorised Absences	
C	absence due to exceptional circumstances, agreed by the headteacher
C1	in a regulated performance/undertaking regulated employment abroad
C2	absent due to part-time timetable, agreed by the headteacher and parent(s)/carer(s)
D	dual registered
E	suspended or permanently excluded, and no alternative provision made
I	illness (both physical and mental health related; not medical or dental appointments)
J1	job/school/college interview
M	medical or dental appointment
Q	unable to attend because of a lack of access arrangements
R	religious observance (only 1 day allowed; any more coded as C if agreed)
S	study leave
T	parent travelling for occupational purposes
X	non-compulsory school age pupil not required to attend school
Y1	unable to attend due to transport provided not being available
Y2	unable to attend due to widespread transport disruption
Y3	unable to attend due to part of the school premises being unexpectedly closed
Y4	unable to attend due to unexpected whole school closure
Y5	unable to attend as pupil is in criminal justice detention
Y6	unable to attend in accordance with public health guidance or law
Y7	unable to attend due to other avoidable cause (must affect the pupil NOT the parent)

Unauthorised Absences	
G	holiday or absence for leisure-related purposes (not agreed by the headteacher)
N	reason for absence not yet established (must be corrected within 5 days)
O	absent in other or unknown circumstances
U	late after register has closed
Administrative Codes	
Z	prospective pupil not yet on register
#	planned whole school closure (e.g., holidays, Insets and polling station days)

Appendix 3 – Attendance Letters

Letter 1 – Drop in attendance

Letter 2 – Invite parents/carers in to discuss attendance – general poor attendance

Letter 3 – Concerns about a pupil's high level of absence – invite in for discussion

Letter 4 – Concerns about a pupil's unauthorised absence – invite in for discussion

Letter 5 – Formal notice about unauthorised absence – requesting penalty notice

Letter 6 – Letter regarding poor attendance – Post 16

Letter 6 – Letter regarding poor attendance following request to change placement

Letter 7 – Concern about punctuality

Letter 8 – Accepting a request for a leave of absence

Letter 9 – Declining a request for a leave of absence

Letter 10 – After an unauthorised holiday

Letter 11 – After an unauthorised holiday – requesting a penalty notice

Letter 12 – Accepting a request for absence for religious observance

Letter 13 – Rejecting a request for absence for religious observance

Letter 14 – Congratulations for improving attendance

Letter 15 –Letter for Encouraging attendance for the rest of the term / upcoming events

Letter 1 – Drop in attendance

Dear [insert name of parent/carer],

Re: Attendance Concerns – Term #

We are writing to inform you that we have noticed an increase in absences for **Insert Name**. Their current attendance is **insert %**. As a school, we are committed to supporting every student in achieving their full potential, and regular attendance plays a crucial role in this.

According to the latest research from the Department for Education (March 2025), students with attendance rates of 95–100% are **2.2 times more likely to achieve a Grade 5 or above in English and Maths GCSEs at Key Stage 4**, compared to those with lower attendance. These findings highlight the significant impact that even small drops in attendance can have on academic outcomes.

To encourage and reward improved attendance, we are pleased to remind you of the following initiatives:

- **Attendance Improvement Raffle:** Students who improve their attendance by **10% or more in a term** will be entered into a raffle to win **vouchers**.
- **Inter-Hub/Tutor Group Attendance Competition:** Each big term, student attendance contributes to their hub's total score. The hub with the highest attendance wins a **pizza party** celebration!

We understand that absences can sometimes be unavoidable. However, we ask for your continued support in ensuring **Insert Name** attends school regularly and punctually. If there are any barriers to attendance that we can help with, please do not hesitate to contact the Head of School or Pastoral Team at Goldwyn Ashford.

Thank you for your attention to this matter and for your ongoing support.

Yours sincerely,

[Name]

Head of School

Letter 2 – Invite parents/carers in to discuss attendance – general poor attendance

Use this letter to invite parents/carers in to have a discussion about attendance.

Dear [insert name of parent/carer],

Invitation to discuss [name]'s school attendance

We would like to invite you to come in to have a chat about [name]'s attendance at school. Our aim is to understand and address any barriers together, and to make sure [name] is fully supported in attending school regularly.

During the meeting, we would like to talk about:

- Whether there is anything happening at school that makes it difficult for [name] to attend
- Whether there are any challenges at home that we could help with, or that you would like us to be aware of
- Anything we can do to support you or make it easier for [name] to attend school regularly

Next steps

- Please contact the school office on [number], as soon as possible so we can arrange a time to chat
- We will work together to understand any challenges and put support in place
- If you need any assistance (such as translation services or accessibility support), please let us know when you get in touch
- If you are unable to attend in person, we can arrange a phone or video call

We are here to support you and [name], and we hope to work together to find the best way forward.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter.

Yours sincerely

[Name]

Head of School

Letter 3 – Concerns about a pupil's high level of absence – invite in for discussion

Use this letter in situations where a pupil's absence has been authorised, but absence levels are high.

For example:

- A pupil is regularly ill, but doesn't have an identified medical need
- Combined circumstances (such as a family bereavement and pupil illness) means the pupil has missed a lot of lesson time

Dear [insert name of parent/carer],

Invitation to discuss [name]'s school attendance

We are writing to you because we have noticed that [pupil name] has missed a significant amount of school recently. We understand that every family's situation is unique, and we want to work with you to make sure [pupil name] is able to succeed at school.

Why we are contacting you:

- [Pupil name] has missed [insert number of days missed and over what time period], meaning they have missed out on [insert absence as a percentage] of learning time this [term/year]
- We are aware of the following reasons for these absences: [insert known reasons, e.g., illness, family circumstances]
- We are concerned that these absences may mean [pupil name] is missing out on key parts of their education and may risk falling behind with their learning

How we can work together:

We want to support both you and [pupil name] in any way we can, and to understand if there is anything further happening at home or at school that may be making attendance difficult.

Together, we can:

- Identify any additional support [pupil name] might need
- Explore ways to help [pupil name] catch up on school they've missed
- Discuss any temporary or ongoing circumstances affecting attendance

Next steps:

- Please contact the school office on [number] at your earliest convenience so we can arrange a time to talk
- If you prefer, you can reply to this letter with any information you'd like to share before our conversation

We want to work collaboratively with you to help [pupil name] overcome any barriers to regular attendance and make sure they feel supported and confident at school.

Thank you for your understanding and co-operation.

Yours sincerely

[Name]

Head of School

Letter 4 – Concerns about a pupil's unauthorised absence – invite in for discussion

Dear [insert name of parent/carer],

Invitation to discuss [name]'s unauthorised absence

We are writing to you because we have noticed that [pupil name] has recently taken an unauthorised [absence/absences] from school.

Details of absence

[Name] has been absent from school for a total of [number] days on the following dates:

- [date]
- [date]
- [date]

This means they have missed out on [insert absence as a percentage] of learning time this [term/year].

Why regular attendance matters

We want to work together with you to ensure [name] is able to:

- Fully engage in their learning and make good academic progress
- Develop friendships and feel part of the school community
- Build routines and confidence that will help both now, and in the future

How we can support you

We understand that every family's circumstances are unique, and there may be challenges at home or school that make attendance difficult. However, we're here to help.

Please let us know if:

- There is anything happening at home or at school that's affecting [name]'s attendance
- You need support with helping [name] attend regularly
- There are gaps in [name]'s learning we can help to address

Next steps

- Please contact the school office on [number] as soon as possible, so we can arrange a time to discuss these absences
- We will work together to understand any challenges and agree on how we can help [name] catch up on any missed schoolwork

Important information about unauthorised absence

We want to be open about the school's responsibilities. Please note:

- Unauthorised absences can result in a penalty notice being issued if your child has 10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a rolling period of 10 school weeks (10 sessions is equivalent to 5 days)
- More information about penalty notices and the attendance policy are available on our school website [insert school website URL], or from the school office

We are committed to working with you and [name] to support their learning and wellbeing. Please do get in touch so we can move forward together.

Yours sincerely

[Name]

Head of School

Letter 5 – Formal notice about unauthorised absence – requesting penalty notice

A formal notice like this should only be used as an absolute last resort. Use this letter if:

- You have previously tried multiple times to address a pupil's unauthorised absence
- You have tried engaging with the parents/carers in different ways and they refuse to engage or work with you
- The pupil's unauthorised absence has reached the national threshold for the use of a penalty notice (10 or more sessions of unauthorised absence within a 10-school-week period) and
- You have decided it's appropriate to issue a penalty notice (see paragraph 182 of Working together to improve school attendance for questions to consider when making this decision)

Dear [insert name of parent/carer],

Formal notice regarding unauthorised absence – Penalty Notice

At [school name], we are committed to working in partnership with families to ensure every child can succeed in their education. We know that sometimes there are challenges that can make regular attendance difficult, and we want to support you and [name] wherever possible.

Why we're writing to you

On [date], we contacted you to discuss [name]'s recent unauthorised absences. Since then, we have not seen the necessary improvement in [name]'s attendance, and they have missed the following days of school:

- [date]
- [date]
- [date]

[Name] has now had 10 or more sessions of unauthorised absence in a rolling period of 10 school weeks. This is equivalent to 5 days. Regular attendance is not only a legal requirement, but also essential for [name]'s learning, social development and future opportunities.

What happens next

In line with our attendance policy and the local authority's code of practice, we have no option but to request a penalty notice be issued. We want to assure you this decision has not been taken lightly and comes after careful consideration.

When you receive the penalty notice, you will need to pay:

- **£80, if paid within 21 days**
- **£160, if paid after 21 days but within 28 days**

If payment is not made within 28 days, the local authority may decide to pursue further legal action.

We want to work together

We are still here to help and want to explore with you any barriers to [name]'s attendance. We would like to invite you to a meeting to discuss:

- Any issues at school that may be affecting [name]'s attendance, or ways we could support you
- Anything at home that you think we should be aware of, or that we could help with
- Ways we can work together to support [name] in attending school more regularly

Please contact the school office on [number], as soon as possible to arrange a time that works for you. Our aim is to support [name] in catching up on any missed work and to ensure their ongoing wellbeing and success at school.

If you have any questions about this process, or need support, please do not hesitate to get in touch.

Yours sincerely

[Name]

Principal

Letter 6 – Letter regarding poor attendance – Post 16

Dear [insert name of parent/carer],

Re: Concerns Regarding [Student Name]’s Attendance

I am writing to express our serious concern regarding [Student Name]’s ongoing absence from school. As a post-16 student with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP), regular attendance is not only essential for academic progress but also a legal requirement under the Children and Families Act 2014.

The Department for Education’s statutory guidance *Working Together to Improve School Attendance* (updated August 2024) outlines that persistent absence—defined as attendance below 90%—must be addressed through a collaborative and supportive approach. Despite our efforts to engage and support [Student Name], attendance has not improved to a satisfactory level. [\[Kent Count...e Handbook\]](#)

Kent County Council (KCC) has made clear in its School Attendance Handbook (January 2025) that persistent absence may trigger an annual review of the EHCP, and if the provision is deemed no longer necessary due to lack of engagement, the EHCP may be ceased. This is a significant step that could affect [Student Name]’s access to specialist support and future educational opportunities. [\[Kent Count...e Handbook\]](#)

We fully understand that many students face complex barriers to attendance, and we are committed to working with you to overcome these. Our engagement curriculum offers flexible schooling options, outreach support, and tailored interventions designed to meet individual needs. However, unless we see demonstrable progress in attendance—or receive formal advice from a Tier 4 mental health practitioner indicating that attendance is not currently appropriate—we are obliged to escalate this matter in line with statutory guidance.

We urge you to contact us as soon as possible to arrange a meeting so we can discuss a plan of action. Our priority is to support [Student Name] in re-engaging with education in a way that is both meaningful and manageable.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. We look forward to working with you to find a positive way forward.

Yours sincerely

[Name]

Head of School

Letter 6 – Letter regarding poor attendance following request to change placement

Date

Dear [insert parents names]

Re: School Attendance following request to change placement

I am writing to express our serious concern regarding [insert student name] ongoing absence from school. As a student with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP), regular attendance is not only essential for academic progress but also a legal requirement under the Children and Families Act 2014. The Department for Education's statutory guidance Working Together to Improve School Attendance (updated August 2024) outlines that persistent absence—defined as attendance below 90%—must be addressed through a collaborative and supportive approach. Despite our efforts to engage and support regarding [insert student name], their attendance has not improved to a satisfactory level. [Kent Count...e Handbook]

While we acknowledge that your request to change placement for [insert student name] is an important decision that you have put a lot of time and thought into, the Local Authority process of reviewing placements can take time. We must emphasise the importance of [insert student name] continuing to attend school during this period. Regular attendance is vital not only for maintaining academic progress but also for supporting emotional wellbeing, social development, and continuity of care.

At Goldwyn School we remain committed to providing a safe, supportive, and enriching environment for [insert student name] while any decisions regarding placement are being considered by Kent County Council. We are here to work with you and ensure that [insert student name] needs are met. To support [insert student name], we are currently offering them the following provision:

[Insert offer of provision]

Please be aware that prolonged absence from school can have a significant impact on [insert student name] learning and may also affect the outcome of any placement decisions. We strongly encourage you to ensure [insert student name] returns to school as soon as possible so that we can continue to support them effectively.

If there are any concerns or barriers preventing [insert student name] from attending, please do not hesitate to contact us. We are happy to discuss any further support we can offer to facilitate their return.

Thank you for your continued partnership and understanding.

Yours sincerely

[Name]

Head of School

Letter 7 – Concern about punctuality

Dear [insert name of parent/carer],

Concern about [pupil name]'s punctuality

We are writing to you because [pupil name] has been late to school [number] times in [timeframe]. We know that mornings can sometimes be challenging, and we want to work together with you to support [name] in arriving on time each day.

Details of lateness:

- **Arrived after the register closed:**
 - [date]
 - [date]
 - [date]
- **Arrived late (before register closed):**
 - [date]
 - [date]
 - [date]

Our school day starts promptly at [time], and registration closes at [time]. Afternoon registration takes place between [time slot].

Arriving on time each day is important because it:

- Ensures your child doesn't miss out on essential learning
- Reduces disruption for teachers and classmates
- Helps your child settle into the school routine

We understand that there may be things happening at home or at school that are making punctuality difficult. Our aim is to work in partnership with you to find solutions. However, it is important to be aware that persistent lateness can result in a penalty notice if your child arrives after the register closes **10 times within 10 weeks**.

Next steps:

We would like to invite you to a meeting to discuss how we can support [name] together. In this meeting, we hope to find out whether there is:

- Anything happening at school that makes it difficult for [name] to arrive on time
- Anything happening at home that we can help with, or that you think we should be aware of
- Anything we can do to make it easier for [name] to be on time for school

Please contact the school office on [number] to arrange a suitable time for this meeting.

If you need help with transport, morning routines, or any other aspect, please let us know in advance so we can make sure the right support is available.

We appreciate your support in making sure [name] gets the most out of their school day. If you have any questions before the meeting, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Yours sincerely

[Name]

Head of School

Letter 8 – Accepting a request for a leave of absence

Dear [insert name of parent/carer],

Your request for a leave of absence

Thank you for your request to take [name] out of school between [date] and [date].

Having considered the exceptional circumstances set out in your application, I'm able to agree to your request.

I haven't come to this decision lightly. At [school name] we believe that regular attendance throughout the year is essential to every child's success and wellbeing.

We consider each request for a leave of absence on an individual basis and consider the family's specific circumstances.

Please be aware that just because I've agreed to this request, it doesn't mean I'll necessarily be able to agree to any similar request from you, or other parents/carers, in the future.

Yours sincerely

[Name]

Head of School

Letter 9 – Declining a request for a leave of absence

Dear [insert name of parent/carer],

Your request for a leave of absence

Thank you for your request to take [name] out of school between [date] and [date].

After careful consideration, I am unable to authorise this absence. At [school name], we are committed to ensuring that every child attends school regularly, as consistent attendance is vital to each pupil's learning, development and overall success.

I appreciate that this may be disappointing news, but I assure you that this decision has not been taken lightly.

How we consider absence requests:

- Each request is reviewed individually, taking into account the specific family circumstances
- Our decision follows the Department for Education's guidance, which states that headteachers may not grant leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances
- We consider factors such as the reason for the request, the impact on the pupil's education, and any previous attendance patterns

Please know this decision does not set a precedent for future requests, nor does it reflect decisions made in the past or for other families. Our aim is always to act in the best interests of all our pupils.

If you have any questions or would like to discuss this further, please do not hesitate to get in touch.

Thank you for your understanding and support in helping us provide the best education for [pupil's name].

Yours sincerely

[Name]

Head of School

Letter 10 – After an unauthorised holiday

Date

Dear [Parent/Carer's Name],

Re: Unauthorised Holiday During Term Time – [Student's Name]

I am writing to inform you that following [Student's Name] absence from school between [start date] and [end date] due to a holiday taken during term time, this absence has been recorded as unauthorised in accordance with our school attendance policy and national guidance.

Regular attendance at school is vital for every student's educational progress, emotional wellbeing, and social development. Time away from school during term time can have a significant impact, including:

- Interrupted learning: Students miss out on key lessons and structured support, which can lead to gaps in understanding and difficulty catching up.
- Reduced progress: Consistent attendance is closely linked to academic achievement. Missing school can hinder progress, especially in core subjects.
- Social disruption: Time away from peers can affect friendships and social confidence, particularly for students with additional needs.
- Routine and structure: Many students at Goldwyn benefit from the stability and routine that school provides. Extended absences can disrupt this and affect behaviour and emotional regulation.

We understand that family time is important, but we must prioritise your child's education and wellbeing. In line with Department for Education guidance, holidays during term time will not be authorised unless there are exceptional circumstances.

If you would like to discuss this matter further or require support with attendance, please do not hesitate to contact the school.

Thank you for your understanding and continued support.

Yours sincerely

Head of School

Letter 11 – After an unauthorised holiday – requesting a penalty notice

Dear [insert name of parent/carer],

Re: Unauthorised Holiday During Term Time – [Student's Name]

I'm writing to you regarding your decision to take [name] out of school for a family holiday between [date] and [date]. After reviewing the circumstances, we must treat this as an unauthorised absence because [explain the evidence you have].

At [school name], we firmly believe that regular attendance throughout the year is essential for every child's educational success and wellbeing. We appreciate that family time is important, and we want to work together to ensure your child gets the very best out of their education.

Our approach to leaves of absence

We are only able to grant leaves of absence in exceptional circumstances, and unfortunately, holidays during term time do not generally fall under this category. We ask that families always consult the school before making any plans that would mean a child misses time at school. Absences like these can have a significant impact on your child's progress and confidence in school.

Use the following if the child's absence has reached the threshold for a penalty notice and you have decided it's appropriate to issue one (see paragraph 182 of Working together to improve school attendance for questions to consider when making this decision):

[Name] has now had 10 or more sessions of unauthorised absence in a rolling period of 10 school weeks. This is equivalent to 5 days. In line with our attendance policy and the local authority's code of practice, you will be issued with a penalty notice.

When you receive the notice, you must pay:

- £80, if it's paid within 21 days
- £160, if it's paid after 21 days but within 28 days

If payment is not made within 28 days, the local authority may decide to pursue further legal action.

Insert the following if the threshold for a penalty notice has not been reached, or you have decided it's not appropriate to issue one:

Please note that unauthorised absences can result in a penalty notice being issued if your child has 10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a rolling period of 10 school weeks (10 sessions is equivalent to 5 days). You can find more information about penalty notices in our school attendance policy. Copies of the policy are available on our school website [insert the school website URL] or from the school office.

Working together – next steps

We want to support you and [name] to ensure they feel confident, happy and engaged in school.

We would like to invite you to a meeting to discuss this absence and work together to prevent any further disruption to [name]'s learning. Please contact the school office as soon as possible on [phone number] to arrange a convenient time to meet.

If you are experiencing any difficulties that may be affecting [name]'s attendance, please let us know. Our priority is to support your family and your child's education.

Thank you for your understanding and co-operation.

Yours sincerely

[Name]

Principal

Letter 12 – Accepting a request for absence for religious observance

Dear [insert name of parent/carer],

Your request for absence for religious observance

Thank you for letting us know about your request for [name] to be absent from school on [date] for [religious occasion]. At [school name], we deeply value and respect the diverse backgrounds and beliefs of our school community. We understand that religious observance is an important part of your family's life and [name]'s sense of identity.

In this instance, I am happy to confirm that your request has been approved. The absence will be recorded as authorised, and we will support [name] in catching up with any missed work on their return.

Please note:

- Each request for absence due to religious observance is considered individually, based on the information provided at the time
- While we are pleased to support your family on this occasion, this decision does not automatically set a precedent for future requests, either from your family or others

If you have any other requests or questions about absences for religious observance, please contact the school office on [contact number] or email [school email].

Thank you for working with us to support [name]'s education and wellbeing.

Yours sincerely

[Name]

Head of School

Letter 13 – Rejecting a request for absence for religious observance

Dear [insert name of parent/carer],

Your request for absence for religious observance

Thank you for your request for [pupil name] to be absent from school on [date] for [religious occasion]. At [school name], we recognise and respect the diverse religious beliefs within our community, and we always aim to support families in practising their faith. Each request for absence is carefully considered in line with our school's attendance policy and government guidance.

On this occasion, I'm sorry to say that I am unable to authorise the absence requested. While we appreciate the importance of religious observance, the request does not meet the criteria for authorised absence for religious observance as set out in government statutory attendance guidance.

We are required to balance the needs of individual families with our responsibility to ensure all pupils receive the best possible education and maintain regular attendance.

Please note:

If [pupil name] does not attend school on the specified date(s), the absence will be recorded as unauthorised.

Unauthorised absences can affect your child's attendance record and, where applicable, may result in further action in line with local authority guidelines.

If you feel there are additional circumstances you would like us to consider, please contact me directly so we can discuss your situation further.

We truly value your support and understanding as we work together to prioritise your child's education. If you have any questions or need further guidance, please don't hesitate to get in touch.

Yours sincerely

[Name]

Head of School

Letter 14 – Congratulations for improving attendance

Dear [insert name of parent/carer],

Congratulations on improved attendance!

We are absolutely delighted to celebrate [name]'s fantastic achievement in improving their school attendance!

Since [date], [name]'s attendance rate has increased from [percentage]% to [percentage]% – this means [number] additional days of valuable learning and experiences at school. This is a significant accomplishment and a testament to [name]'s commitment and your ongoing support at home.

Why this matters:

Regular attendance makes a real difference to children's progress, friendships and confidence. By being in school more often, [name] is giving themselves the best chance to succeed and enjoy everything our school has to offer.

A big thank you for encouraging and supporting [name] to attend regularly – your partnership is so important.

Celebrating success:

To recognise [name]'s hard work and improvement, [he/she/they] will be:

- [Include details of any reward scheme, e.g. receiving a certificate in assembly, being entered into a prize draw, or another recognition your school offers]

Next steps:

We encourage [name] to keep up this fantastic effort! If you need any further support or have questions about attendance, please don't hesitate to contact us at [school office contact details].

Once again, congratulations to [name] and your family on this wonderful achievement.

Yours sincerely

[Name]

Head of School

Letter 15 –Letter for Encouraging attendance for the rest of the term / upcoming events

Date

Dear [insert parent name]

We are delighted to celebrate the fantastic levels of attendance across Goldwyn Ashford / Folkestone this year. Thank you for your support with this. It's great to see so many students arriving each day ready to learn. Regular attendance really does make a difference, every day in school helps them build friendships, develop new skills, and make progress in their learning.

As we head into the rest of this term, and the colder weather approaches, we would like to remind everyone just how important it is to keep coming to school every day. We understand that, from time to time, your child may feel a little under the weather, but if they are well enough to be in school, we encourage them to attend. Often, once they're here and among their friends, they quickly perk up and have a great day.

We have so many exciting events and opportunities coming up that your child won't want to miss:

Upcoming Events:

Thank you for your continued support in helping [insert child name] to make the most of every school day. Together, we can ensure they finish the term feeling proud of all they have achieved.

With best wishes

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Head of School